

Victim Services at Juvenile Corrections Center–Nampa

Value Statement:



Victim Awareness is more than just part of the Balanced and Restorative Justice Model.

It is our commitment to have those who have been victims of juvenile offender's crimes to have their voices heard and their stories understood by those who committed crimes against them.

To help juvenile offenders make amends through restitution, community service, and a better understanding on their part of being a contributing member of our communities.

Contact: Please contact Victim Program Coordinator Colleen Foster, (208) 465-8443, extension 151, for questions or more information.

Victim Impact Panels: The Juvenile Corrections Center–Nampa (JCC–Nampa) is conducting victim impact panels approximately every other month. We are using volunteers from the community to share their stories about how their lives have been impacted by crime. We welcome community members to participate in the panels to share their experience of how being a victim of a crime, directly or indirectly, have and continue to affect their lives.

JCC–Nampa selects eligible juvenile offenders to participate in the Victim Impact Panel (VIP). These juvenile offenders have worked on their own issues that may have added to their choices which created victims in the community and in their own families. Before they attend a VIP they will have explored in journals, program groups, and classes how their own beliefs, values, actions and choices have not only been life changing to them but also to those they victimized. We began our VIP services in October of 2008.

Victim Awareness Journal: JCC–Nampa currently uses the *Victim Awareness Journal*, adopted September 2007 after collaboration with all three state juvenile correctional centers. The *Victim Awareness Journal* focuses on responsibility of juvenile offenders' individual choices, accountability for the victimization or damage their choices created,

directly and indirectly, and the need for courage to be accountable and responsible for their actions, and to take action to make amends and restitution for their actions as much as possible without creating further victimization to those they have already hurt. The *Victim Awareness Journal* is published for the Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections (Department) by The Change Companies. The journals are based upon best practices and what works according to research findings.

Community Service: JCC–Nampa uses community service as part of a juvenile offender’s treatment process. The projects offer hands-on opportunities to allow juvenile offenders to make amends, experience community involvement/investment, and demonstrate positive values in the community. Some of the projects that we participate in is delivering food boxes to participants of the CCOA program, helping with the Sawtooth National Recreational Area fence rebuilding, cleaning and helping with the local fish hatcheries, sending care packages to military personnel, and other projects that are inspired by juvenile offenders, staff, and community to help make an impact on bettering our community and restoring more trust in the juvenile offenders being able to return to their communities as contributing members and not victimizers.

Victim Apology Letter: While juvenile offenders are at JCC–Nampa, they complete a list of the people and/or businesses they feel they have victimized by their actions. As juvenile offenders move forward in the program, the victim list is adjusted to include other victims as they see the ripple effect their choices have had on others.

As juvenile offenders progress through their treatment, juvenile offenders at JCC–Nampa complete victim apology letters to their victims. Draft letters are shared with their peers, their staff mentor and their Rehabilitation Specialist. Upon approval by all of the above, the letters are sent or shared with their Juvenile Probation Officer and Juvenile Services Coordinator. If the juvenile offender’s treatment team believes it is appropriate, an approval may be given for distribution of the juvenile offender’s victim letters.

Victim apology letters encourage juvenile offenders to take account of: how they hurt their victim; identify thoughts and feelings the victims might have felt; explain how they understand the victim may have felt that way; explain how they plan to make amends for what they have done; explain to victims what they have done to change their beliefs and attitudes to prevent them from committing those acts in the future that have harmed victims in the past. Juvenile offenders are encouraged to be specific (what did they learn during their stay at JCC–Nampa) and identify their motives for writing the letters.

Additionally, juvenile offenders are taught life skills to build on character development, personal self-esteem, and accountability to help them identify for themselves ways to be personally motivated, positive, productive citizens of the communities to which they will be returning.